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rotary member, and the output shaft is supported relative to the through-hole of the vibration member at a position substantially corresponding to a node of a vibration generated in the vibration member within the through-hole of the vibration members.--

*/* IN THE CLAIMS:

*/* Please cancel Claim 6 without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

Please amend Claims 1 and 9, as follows. A marked-up copy of Claims 1 and 9, showing the changes thereto, is attached. Note that all the claims currently pending in the application, including those presently amended, have been reproduced below for the Examiner's convenience.

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1. (Twice Amended) A vibration wave driving apparatus comprising:

a vibration member formed by an elastic member having an electro-mechanical energy conversion element fixed thereto, and having a through-hole extending through a central portion thereof;

a support member fixed to said vibration member;

a rotary member in press contact with said vibration member, and having a through-hole extending through a central portion thereof;

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an output shaft extending through the through-hole of said vibration member and the through-hole of said rotary member, and rotatable with said rotary member;

a case packaging said vibration member and said rotary member therein, and fixing one end portion of said support member, thereby supporting said vibration member; and

a plurality of bearings provided in said case, said plurality of bearings rotatably supporting said output shaft,

wherein the output shaft supports said vibration member at a position substantially corresponding to a node of a vibration generated in said vibration member, within the through-hole of said vibration member.

2. (Amended) A vibration wave driving apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the through-hole of said vibration member provides a bearing surface.

3. A vibration wave driving apparatus according to Claim 1, wherein the through-hole of said vibration member has a bearing supported by said output shaft.

4. A vibration wave driving apparatus according to Claim 3, wherein the bearing in the through-hole of said vibration member supported by said output shaft is a sliding bearing.